

President & Chief Executive Officer

Location
Seattle, Washington

Reports to
Board of Trustees

Search led by
ND Leadership Partners,
Managing Partner Chris Nguyen

Lead the next chapter of one of Seattle's defining civic institutions.

Friends of Waterfront Park is seeking an accomplished executive leader to help shape the future of Seattle's waterfront, strengthen the organization behind it, and build the partnerships, culture, leadership capacity and financial foundation required for lasting public impact.

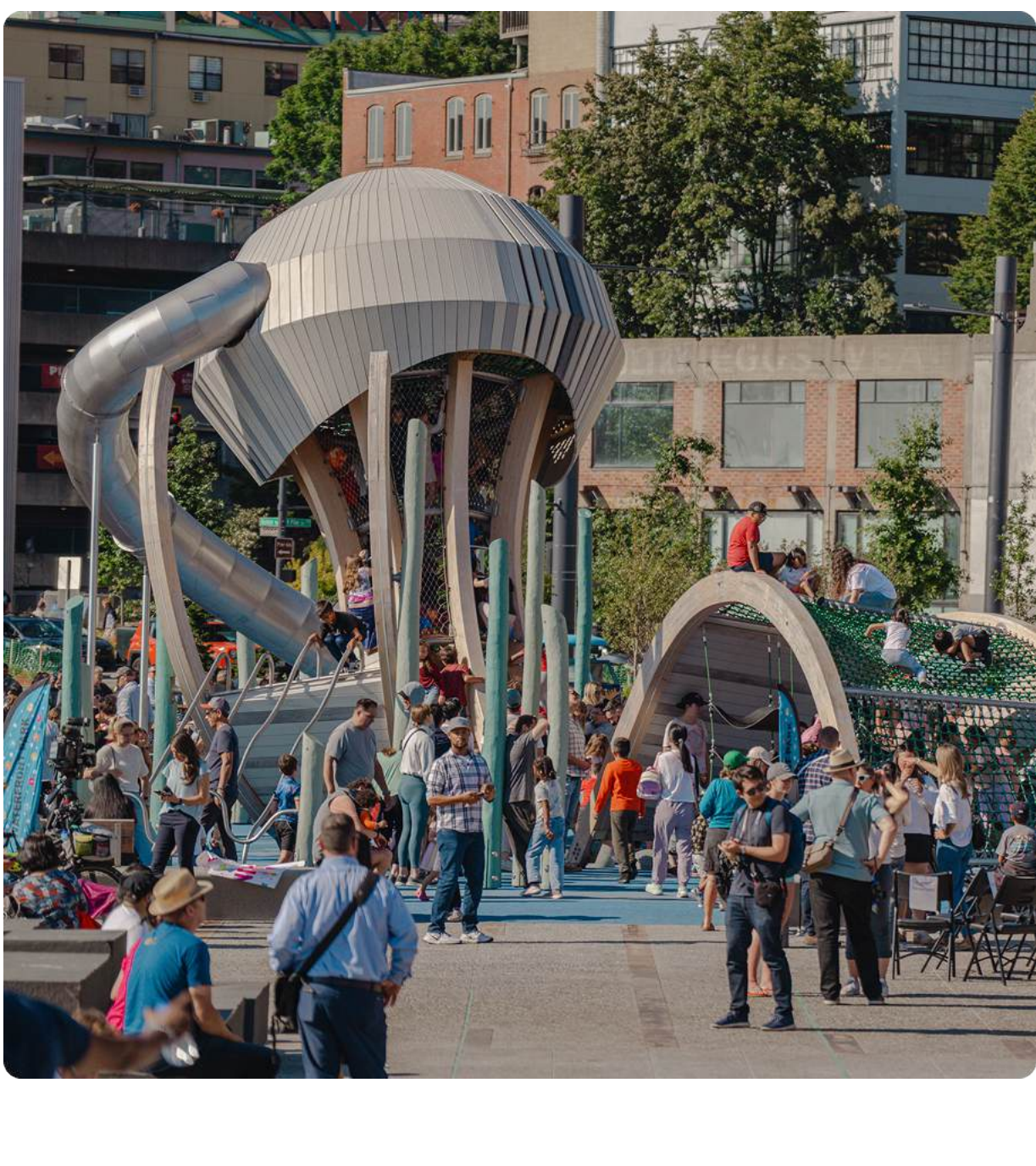
About Friends of Waterfront Park

Friends of Waterfront Park is the nonprofit organization responsible for fundraising, stewarding and programming Seattle's 20-acre Waterfront Park, a new public space stretching along the city's central shoreline and reconnecting downtown Seattle with Elliott Bay. Working alongside the City of Seattle, Seattle Center, community organizations, cultural partners, philanthropic contributors and neighboring businesses, Friends brings the park to life through free arts and cultural programming, recreation and wellness, community events, public space activation, partnerships and ongoing stewardship. At its core, Friends works to ensure Waterfront Park is more than a physical place: it is a welcoming and inclusive civic gathering space where people and communities can connect with one another, Seattle's waterfront and the stories and cultures that define the region.

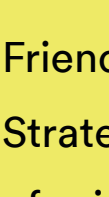
The Opportunity

Seattle's Waterfront Park is the product of decades of civic imagination, public investment, philanthropy, community engagement and partnership. With the capital campaign complete and the full park open, Friends of Waterfront Park is entering a new institutional chapter. The opportunity ahead is to define the organization's long-term role, strengthen its internal and external leadership capacity, deepen civic and regional partnerships and build a durable financial model that sustains a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming waterfront for generations.

The Board seeks a President and Chief Executive Officer who can lead at the intersection of strategy, people, philanthropy, government, community and civic life. Staff emphasized the importance of a leader whose internal presence, communication and values are as strong and consistent as their external visibility. The successful executive will build trust, communicate consistently, build leadership capacity, foster collaboration and create clarity while representing Friends with confidence across Seattle and the broader region.

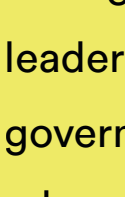


Key Priorities



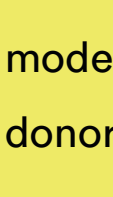
Build the Institution for the Next Era

Partner with the Board and staff to define Friends' next chapter, guided by the Strategic Plan, and establish a focused set of priorities understood across the organization. Strengthening organizational capacity, culture, communication and accountability so Friends has the people, systems and resources to succeed.



Advocate for Friends and Steward a Complex Public-Private Partnership

Strengthen Friends' position as a civic leader and trusted partner. Navigate government with political sophistication; advocate for the park and the resources needed to sustain it; build coalitions across public, private and community partners; and shape the next Management Agreement with the City.



Build a Sustainable Financial Model

Develop a diversified long-term financial model that strengthens philanthropy and donor engagement while expanding government support, corporate partnerships, grants, earned revenue and other mission-aligned resources. Ensure the model supports public access, programming and long-term stewardship.

Across each of these priorities, success will be reflected in a Waterfront Park that remains welcoming, vibrant and inclusive while Friends expands its impact and relevance across Seattle and the region.

Competencies and Experience

Friends welcomes candidates from nonprofit, public, philanthropic, cultural, higher education, economic development and other mission-driven environments. Direct park-management experience is not required. The Search Committee will place significant weight on how candidates lead and on the depth of experience they bring navigating complex, public-facing organizations. The following competencies reflect the capabilities and experiences most important to success in this role.



Strategic Institution Visionary

Sets direction and translates complexity into focused priorities, organizational capacity and sustainable execution. Creates the conditions for others to lead effectively.



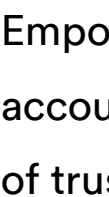
Civic and Political Navigator

Navigates government and complex civic environments with political sophistication and sound judgment. Advocates effectively for Friends, Waterfront Park and the public resources required to advance their long-term impact.



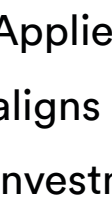
Coalition and Relationship Builder

Creates alignment among people and institutions with varying interests. Earns trust, communicates effectively and mobilizes public, private, philanthropic and community partners around shared outcomes.



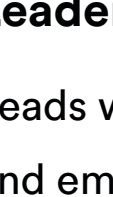
Leadership and Talent Developer

Empowers strong leaders, establishes accountability and creates an environment of trust, collaboration, belonging and professional growth.



Financial Steward

Applies strong financial judgment and aligns philanthropy, government investment, partnerships, earned revenue and disciplined resource allocation to advance long term sustainability.



Inclusive and Resilient Change Leader

Leads with humility, curiosity, courage and emotional intelligence. Understands context, makes difficult decisions and brings people through change with clarity and steadiness.

Leading the Next Chapter

Friends has built significant community credibility, programming expertise, partnerships and institutional knowledge. The next CEO will be expected to understand and build upon those strengths while bringing greater strategic clarity and organizational maturity. The strongest leader will know when to listen, when to preserve what is working and when to move decisively to position Friends for its next era.

Why Friends of Waterfront Park

This is a rare executive opportunity at the intersection of civic leadership, public space, arts and culture, community belonging, economic vitality, philanthropy and government.

The next President and CEO will inherit extraordinary momentum, a highly visible public asset, an engaged Board, talented and committed staff and a network of influential partners. They will also have the opportunity to help define the institution that supports the waterfront for decades to come.

For an executive who believes great cities are strengthened through shared public spaces, strong institutions, inclusive workplaces and authentic partnerships, this role offers the opportunity to leave a visible and lasting legacy.

Compensation and Benefits

\$280,000-\$340,000

The anticipated compensation range for the President and Chief Executive Officer is \$280,000 - \$340,000 annually, commensurate with experience and qualifications. Friends of Waterfront Park offers a comprehensive benefits package. Final compensation will be determined by the organization's compensation philosophy and the experience of the selected candidate.

Search Process

This search is being conducted by ND Leadership Partners, led by Managing Partner Chris Nguyen. Qualified candidates and referral sources are encouraged to engage with ND Leadership Partners. All expressions of interest will be managed with appropriate discretion and confidentiality throughout the search process.

Interested candidates are strongly encouraged to inquire promptly; applications received by Friday, September 11 will receive priority consideration and may be reviewed thereafter as the search continues. You can email Chris directly at Chris@nextdeavor.com.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Friends of Waterfront Park is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all qualified applicants and employees without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, veteran or military status or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law.

Search led by
ND Leadership Partners



Chris Nguyen
Managing Partner, ND Leadership Partners
206.350.7772 Chris@nextdeavor.com

